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1875



THE  
BATTLE  
OF  
WATERLOO.

*A POEM.*

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BY  
GEORGE WALKER.

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## PREFACE.

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**I** HAVE been induced to adopt the simple style of the Old English Ballad, in hopes that my work will in that dress find its place in the Farm-house and the Cottage, it being vain to expect shelter from the rich and the great, in competition with such poets as Scott, Byron, Southey, Swift, &c.

I have no doubt that many will prefer this native and simple style to the high ornaments of heroic pomp; and I am led to this belief, from observing that most of our historic tales, most of our interesting stories, and



*legendary ballads, and even one version of the Psalms used in our churches, are formed to this measure, which, indeed, appears to be the natural inclination of our language in its first step from prose.*

*I have avoided the introduction of obsolete words, which give to poetical romances so pleasing an air of antiquity, for I considered that an event which must fix such glory on our own times, should be told in our own language.*

*It being possible that this little poem may descend to posterity when the incidents of this unparalleled battle will be only matter of history, I thought it adviseable to give a brief description of the event.*

## *Historical Detail*

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**T**HE Army of the Allies consisted of about 94,000 men, of whom 27,000 Foot, and 7000 Horse, were British: the rest were, the German Legion, the Hanoverian Infantry, the Troops of Brunswick and Nassau, Dutchmen, and Belgians, forming altogether 76,000 Infantry and 18,500 Horse; to which ought to be added the Prussian Army under General Bulow, stationed at St. Lambert, about 15,000, at a great distance to our left, but which yet came up, and turned the wavering fortune of the day, though they had been retarded,

by the badness of the road, from one o'clock, when they ought to have fallen in, until half past four.

The French Army, under the immediate command of Buonaparte, were, at least, 90,000 Infantry and 40,000 Horse, with 500 pieces of Artillery; and in this computation, which, according to some accounts, is 40,000 under the real number, we do not reckon that army under Marshal Grouchy, which was opposed to the Prussians who were with Blucher at Wavre, and were about 50,000 strong.

We must also, in making the comparison of numerical and physical strength, take into the account, not only that the French had double the number of Horse, and one third the superiority in numbers upon the

whole, but they had an army of Polish Lancers and French Cuirassiers, clothed in steel, and, till they were cut in pieces by our Horse-Guards, they were considered as invulnerable, nor could the Light Horse make any impression upon them.

This was nearly the state of the different forces on the morning of the tremendous conflict; but, clearly to understand the disadvantage of the Allies, we must go back to the 15th of June.

The Allies, in too much security that Buonaparte would not commence the war, waited till the Russians and Austrians should be ready, before they acted offensively, and the men were divided at different stations for the greater convenience; Buonaparte, well aware of this scattered disposition of our troops, gathered his forces

from every town and depôt rapidly to a point, and, on the 15th of June, 1815, fell upon the Prussians under Prince Blucher, in hopes wholly to crush them, before we even heard of the action. The Prussians suffered much, and fell back; but they were not defeated. Their retreat, however, exposed our advanced troops, and a brigade was engaged at Les Quatre Bras the same evening.

On the 16th, the struggle was renewed, and the destruction on our part very severe, as we had to oppose three or four times the number of the enemy, unsupported by the Horse, which had not yet come up, which exposed our Infantry dreadfully, nor could they take any advantage of success for want of the cavalry. The Scotch Regiments on this day performed miracles, but they were

dreadfully cut up: out of one regiment, 800 strong in the morning, not more than 50 mustered at night. It was on this day, about seven in the evening, the Duke of Brunswick was killed by a case-shot, amidst a most tremendous fire; for as, on the 15th, Buonaparte had hoped to destroy the Prussians by concentrating his force on that point, he this day thought to overwhelm the British and their Allies, and destroy them in detail; but in this he was prevented by the gallant sacrifice of those men who stood the brunt of his whole exertions.

These actions continued partially, but very severely, on the 17th; the English fell back upon the forest of Soignés and Waterloo, with Brussels about fifteen miles behind them.

Here they took up a position. The rest

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of the army had now come up, and every preparation was made for a general engagement the next day. The rain fell in torrents all night.

On the morning of the 18th, which was Sunday, the Allies occupied the heights of Mount St. John; their right, under Lord Hill, stretched to Braine, with Hougoumont in front, towards its left; their centre was upon the Brussels road and La Haye Sainte; and the left wing at La Haye, towards Jean Loo.

Opposed to these were the French; their centre at La Belle Alliance, their right towards a wood, and their left beyond Hougoumont. On the west of the Brussels road was erected a wooden platform which commanded nearly the whole scene of action, and there Buonaparte stood the greatest

part of the day: though when he hoped to make a decisive blow, he headed the Imperial Guard himself to the charge, but was always driven in with great slaughter by the Duke of Wellington.

The two great objects in the plan of the day were—First, to penetrate and break the British centre, and Secondly, to turn their left; and prevent a junction with the Prussians, should they attempt to come up to our assistance. These two points were disputed from the morning when the battle began to the moment of its decision. As fast as one mass of troops was cut down, or blown into pieces by the artillery, another column and other masses came up, so that the labour of destroying them appeared without end.

Never in Modern History has such a

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battle appeared : the conflict was fought with such desperate rage and madness, that few prisoners were taken, and every man on both sides seemed determined to die on the spot. On the part of the French, they fought, not only for existence, but to retrieve their fortune in war, and once more to trample upon all the generations of the earth, and riot in the plunder of their neighbours. On the part of the Allies, they fought for liberty and security in their own nation, for peace amongst all men, and for every thing which makes social life superior to barbarism.

The God of Battles determined the day. A moment longer and perhaps it had been lost ; but at that moment when, on the one hand, courage appeared thrown away upon numbers, and, on the other, when numbers

appeared useless against courage, the van of the Prussians appeared, under Bulow, in the rear of the French right wing, and falling on it fresh, and with fury, they broke it in three places: at the same time the Duke of Wellington, perceiving that the French began to falter, made a charge throughout the whole line; the consequence of which Buonaparte would not stay to witness, for, perceiving that the French gave way in every direction, he galloped off the field, intent only about his personal safety.

The conduct of Buonaparte, when ever his affairs have become desperate; places him as singular in history: intent upon nothing but to save himself, he becomes careless of the frightful calamity in which he has involved those armies which shed their blood for him, and flies the first from the

mischief. A mind with the smallest particle of generosity, or even pity for the woe produced by its ambition, would induce the possessor to die with his brave companions; but that mind is not in Buonaparte. He is a phenomenon in the human species—surrounded by slaughter, amidst the most dreadful scene of human misery, he is cool, callous, and collected; nay, even exposes himself to the chance of the battle with apparent courage. But no sooner does he see that all is lost, than he leaves his army with indifference to utter destruction, and flies with all the speed and fright of the most despicable coward. Such is the man that has deluged Europe with the blood of nations! and singular as he will stand in the pages of History, it will appear not less singular that he was the choice of the

French Nation, and the admiration of many who knew him only by his actions. This may philosophically be explained, by remarking, that—*Affinities will always unite.*

I cannot close this detail without mentioning a trait of *generosity* perfectly characteristic of this *Modern Hero*—Napoleon. He was attended through the day by a person, named, Jean Baptiste La Coste, as a guide. When this man saw his house and property in flames, the tears burst from his eyes. “What do you cry for?” said Napoleon, sarcastically. “I cry to see my whole property perishing,” replied the man. “Am not I Emperor of France? and can I not give you many times the amount?” replied Buonaparte.—La Coste remained with him the rest of the day, and conducted him

in his flight by a secure route, which saved his life. At parting, this *Emperor* presented the unfortunate guide a *Napoleon!* or about eighteen shillings, English.

Not more than 40,000 of the French escaped, and many of these were severely wounded, and without arms, leaving in the field their artillery, arms, baggage, and a deficiency of near 100,000 men; a number which exceeded the whole of that army which had destroyed them. The mind shrinks with horror from such a butchery of the human species, for to this dreadful carnage must be added the loss of the Allies; and it should seem that had not the Prussians decisively turned the struggle in our favour, both armies would have fought till the last man had perished on the field.

## INTRODUCTION.

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**M**AY God protect our Native Land,  
Our Wives and Children dear,  
Nor suffer War's destructive hand  
Our Country to come near.

Let not the rage of Party strife  
Distract our better will,  
But thro' this transient scene of life  
Preserve us all from ill.

War in one sad and ruthless hour  
Would more disaster spread  
Than Peace with mild restoring power  
In many years can shed.

Let those who think to change Mankind  
 The page of History read,  
 If not by Prejudice made blind,  
 Their hearts will surely bleed.

See those, who would reform the state  
 With wild and baseless schemes,  
 Engender only strife, and hate,  
 And dark ambitious dreams.

For when such men as those bear sway,  
 And rule in luckless hour,  
 Whole generations swept away,  
 Point out their ill-used power.

Led on by schemes and dreams like these,  
 The French—Napoleon charm'd :  
 He shew'd them Rapine's form, to please,  
 And all their Passions warm'd.

But leave we to th' Historic page  
 Cause and effect to tell ;  
 Tis ours to sing the Battle's rage,  
 And how the Hero fell.

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SCENE.—*Saturday Night, June 17, and the  
 Morning of Sunday, June 18, 1815, with  
 the Order of Battle.*

Dark was the night, and loud the wind,  
 And loud the tempest roar'd,  
 And cheerless thro' the forest's gloom  
 The rain in torrents pour'd.

No rest the Warrior there could find,  
 No sleep, in bogs and mire ;  
 Chill'd by the rain, he cheerless sat  
 Beside the watchlight fire.



Musing upon the next day's fate,  
Or some endearing tye,—  
A wife—a child—or she who first  
Had taught his heart to sigh.

In every blast that shakes the trees  
He hears the bugle-horn ;  
He starts, he listens to the breeze,  
And anxious waits the morn.

For many a gleam of distant fire  
Flash'd o'er the murky plain,  
And many a wild, uncertain sound  
Pass'd by in wind and rain.

Oft from some dark, obscure recess  
Was heard the soldier's groan,  
And oft upon the fitful wind  
Was heard a dying moan.

For three long days th' *advance* had stood,  
 By double numbers press'd,  
 At Quatre Bras, and in the wood  
 They had been sore distress'd.

The Duke of Brunswick, fierce in fight,  
 Rush'd where the case-shot pour'd ;  
 Contending there with giant might,  
 He fell—by all deplored.

Illustrious Brunswick! Prince of men!  
 Born of a Royal Line,  
 Royalty was not his chiefest gem,  
 His *actions* brighter shine.

Still on the wet and miry grass  
 Expiring victims lay,  
 And every moment seem'd to pass  
 In misery away.

That night the heav'ns shed bitter tears ;  
 For tho' 'twas deep in June,  
 The air was chill'd, and battled clouds  
 Conceal'd the pallid moon.

The war-horse shook his dripping mane,  
 His sides impatient lash'd ;  
 His feet instinctive paw'd the ground,  
 And in the water splash'd.

The dawn at length, the fatal dawn  
 Of that tremendous day,  
 Rose from the east with gloomy brow,  
 And dress'd in misty grey.

When as from sleep and soft repose  
 Some sudden shriek alarms,  
 So up the warrior eager rose,  
 And snatch'd his polish'd arms.

From Mount St. John, from Braine to Haye,  
 Our lines in order stood;  
 In front three hundred cannon rang'd,  
 Behind us Soigné's wood.

Thirty-six thousand British there,  
 With Dutch and Belgians too;  
 Brunswick's and Hanoverians share  
 The fight of Waterloo.

The German Legion, oft times tried,  
 Muster'd five thousand then:  
 Upon that morn th' Allies with pride  
 Shew'd ninety thousand men.

Britain her choicest men had sent,  
 With nobles bold and brave,  
 In Europe's righteous cause to fight,  
 And liberty to save.

Chief in command was Wellington,  
The favour'd care of heav'n.  
The Horse the Earl of Uxbridge led,  
Who oft the foe had driv'n.

Then there was valiant Ponsonby,  
Tremendous in the fight ;  
And Hill, whose mighty fame would fill  
The enemy with fright.

And there was Ferrier, of the Guards,  
Eleven times on, or more,  
He boldly led the furious charge,  
Tho' wounded deep before.

And there was Major Robert Cairnes,  
A man of much tried worth ;  
Ellis, and Hamilton, and Packe ;  
Curson, of noble birth.

Then there was gallant Somerset,  
Who, like a knight of old,  
Rode foremost of a troop of horse,  
Whose banners stream'd with gold.

Fitzgerald, Captain in the Guards,  
At eve with glory fell ;  
Throughout the day *his* splendid acts  
No greater acts excel.

And there was Cooke, and Maitland brave,  
And Byng, and hundreds more ;  
Were I alone to tell their names,  
The tale would ne'er be o'er.

From fertile fields and pleasant plains  
Came England's children true,  
Cool courage brac'd their gen'rous veins  
In the fields of Waterloo.

Brave Caledonia sent her sons  
 From glens and mountains blue ;  
 Right sturdy *chields*, who stood like rocks  
 In the fields of Waterloo.

Hibernia's children, glory's race,  
 From the Isle of green they flew,  
 The enemy of man to chase  
 In the fields of Waterloo.

Oh ! glorious was the sight to see,  
 With banners waving high,  
 Full ninety thousand men, who vow'd  
 To conquer or to die.

These were the champions stout of heart,  
 Whom liberty display'd ;  
 To whelm the upstart Buonaparte  
 Into his native shade.

"Down with the Tyrant! down!" they cried,

"With Nap and all his crew;

"Those, who have God and man defied,

"To every wind we'll strew.

"If France herself, that den of thieves,

"Was phalanx'd on the plain,

"We'd teach those scourges of mankind

"To raise our wrath again."

While thus the loyal ranks exclaim'd,

Battalion'd in array,

The heavens with clouds yet overcast,

Broke out a brighter day.

O then was seen an awful sight,

Far as the eye could trace,

Myriads of French drawn up to fight

Against the human race.



The base, degenerate, perjur'd sons  
Of blood-dy'd France, once more,  
From every guilty town had come  
To steep the earth in gore.

From every nation Europe names  
Their prisoners had been freed ;  
Whose swelling number now proclaims,  
Europe again must bleed.

Napoleon, man of blood and sin,  
Drew out, in dread array  
His countless bands :—resolv'd to win,  
Or else—to run away.

Cold-blooded fiend ! Man seem'd to him  
As born alone to fight ;  
He lov'd to see the widow's tears ;  
Despair was his delight.

His ghastly smile was never seen  
But when destruction spread ;  
Then he would stand with placid mien,  
And view the mangled dead.

Fit chief for such a barbarous race,  
Fit troops for such a knave ;  
Right well they knew the parts to play,  
Of tyrant and of slave.

Determin'd, at one mighty blow,  
By dint of numbers given,  
The hopes of man to overthrow,  
And mar the cause of heaven.

The strength of France was drain'd to send  
An almost countless host,  
Whose lengthen'd lines seem'd without end,  
And endless was their boast.

Now stood these men from left to right,  
Their left at Hougomont ;  
Their right extended o'er the height,  
Their centre fac'd St. John.

Six hundred heavy guns in front,  
Tremendous in array,  
Their fiery jaws expos'd, which wont  
To sweep whole ranks away.

One hundred and forty thousand men,  
A fearful force display'd :  
Twice twenty thousand horsemen stood,  
In various arms array'd.

There was the old Imperial Guard,  
Their eagles waving high ;  
For they had often fought and won  
The useless victory.

With these the conscripts intermix'd,  
 Who burnt to gain renown :  
 Next Cuirassiers, with lances fix'd,  
 And breastplates burnish'd brown.

These, clad in mail, like ancient knights,  
 Came thundering o'er the field ;  
 'Twas death to meet their rapid charge,  
 And death alike to yield.

" Now !" cried Napoleon, " on this night,  
 " Brussels shall pillag'd be,  
 " If you cut up those Englishmen,  
 " Or drive them to the sea.

" Rather would I annihilate,  
 " And utterly tread down,  
 " These English, whom I inly hate,  
 " Than wear the iron crown.

“ Yet sure it is, they bravely look,  
“ And pity it is to slay  
“ Those warriors on the horses black,  
“ And those upon the grey.

“ But tho’ they bold and valiant are,  
“ In less than half an hour,  
“ In pieces I will surely cut  
“ Them all—if I have power.”

So spoke the Man of Blood while he  
Arrang’d the battle’s plan;  
Then gave the word to *Soult* and *Ney*,  
And then the fight began.

SCENE.—*The BATTLE.—Time, from Ten in  
the Morning, until Ten at Night.*

Now scream'd o'er every hill and dale  
The trumpet's brazen cry ;  
One deep-ton'd gun, with dreadful voice,  
Announc'd the battle nigh.

Again ! again ! the heavens resound,  
With still increasing fire ;  
Incessant thunders rock the ground,  
And rapid steps come nigher.

The storms of nature now gave place  
To storms of leaden shower,  
Which sigh'd as through the air they flew,  
Endu'd with murderous power.

Tremendous rolls revibrate round,  
 Nor left one moment's pause ;  
 Earth shook beneath the hideous sound,  
 Hell wonder'd at the cause.

Flash upon flash swift gleam'd in air,  
 As lightning strikes thro' clouds ;  
 Smoke roll'd along the panting earth,  
 And hid the struggling crowds.

For now in fierce and deadly fight  
 Squadrons and ranks engag'd ;  
 From right to left, and left to right,  
 The mighty contest rag'd.

Where General Byng's brigade of Guards  
 Were plac'd at Hougomont,  
 Like surges on a rocky shore,  
 The kindling war roll'd on.

Still as they came, our squares compact  
 Repell'd the furious wave ;  
 Th' Artillery swept them o'er the fields,  
 Into an early grave.

The grand chateau within the wood  
 Blazed to the reddened sky ;  
 Its burning timbers crack'd, and spread  
 Their soaring flames on high.

Three hundred pieces furious play'd  
 A storm of shells and shot,  
 And loud the din of battle bray'd,  
 For now the fight grew hot.

In columns on the ridges plac'd,  
 The British centre stood ;  
 Lord Saltoun and his gallant bands  
 Contended for the wood.



The Coldstream and the Brunswick's black,  
Had each their separate care ;  
The farm, the orchard to protect,  
Which laid our centre bare.

'Twas at this point, the Brussels road,  
Our army cut in twain,  
And here the desperate struggle was  
Which should the post maintain.

The enemy, both horse and foot,  
Imposingly came on ;  
The foot by Jerome Buonaparte,  
The horse by Count D'Erlon.

Their cavalry rush'd on the guns,  
In hopes to bear them down ;  
But found the vollied fire too hot  
Their rash attempt to crown.

Near Belle Alliance, on the hill,  
 The slaughter frightful rag'd ;  
 For there the tug of war was felt,  
 And man to man engag'd.

Deep in the thicket's greenwood shade.  
 Extensive carnage spread :  
 No quarter giv'n—Death stood aghast  
 To see the mangled dead.

'Twas like the slaughter-house of man,  
 Where every limb was strew'd ;  
 The wounded, shrieking, breath'd their last  
 In purple blood imbru'd.

Here fell poor Richard—youth unknown,  
 His mother's only son,  
 She never heard his dying groan,  
 As out his life's-blood run:

'Twas near this fatal place where fell  
 Sir William Ponsonby ;  
 I know that England on that day  
 Had none more brave than he.

The Inniskillen bold dragoons,  
 By his example fir'd,  
 Dash'd thro' their ranks, and hew'd them  
 down ;  
 Then wheeling round, retir'd.

But cheering on to charge the Poles,  
 Whose lancers press'd full near,  
 He rush'd too forward from the lines,  
 And met the fatal spear.

Full speed the lancers rush'd around  
 His Aide-de-Camp and he,  
 And bore them lifeless to the ground ;  
 A piteous sight to see.

O'erwhelm'd with seven lance-wounds at  
 once,

He clos'd his eyes, and fell ;  
 And murmured—" O ! my children dear !  
 " My tender wife !—farewell !"

But ere the day was at an end  
 These lancers dearly paid ;  
 For every man that bore a spear  
 Upon the cold turf laid,

Napoleon from his tower on high,  
 Cried—" How these English fight !  
 " They surely will give way—or fly ?"  
 Said Soult—" Sire, not to-night."

" But why ?" rejoined the Man of Blood,  
 With grim and savage frown.  
 " Sire !" replied Soult, " because, I fear,  
 " They'd rather be cut down."

"Then charge their centre! break their  
"squares!

"Bring forward every gun!"

But still we sent them right about,  
And made the bravest run.

Man urg'd on man—the horse the foot,  
In masses without end;  
Grape from three hundred cannon pour'd,  
And shouts to heav'n ascend.

The Chasseurs and Imperial Guard  
The Emperor led on;  
But then, to meet the mighty shock,  
Flew gallant Wellington.

These men, *Invincibles* in name,  
Had oft struck panic fear  
In Europe's bravest warlike troops,  
But now they paid full dear.

The British Guards in firm array  
Seem'd rooted to the plain ;  
Unmov'd, they turn'd the furious throng  
Into a line of slain.

The Duke led up the Highland lads,  
And Ninety-Fifth in flank ;  
Like grass they mow'd the Frenchmen down,  
In column or in rank.

Still in the thickest of the fight,  
Or in the deep-form'd square ;  
Or in the ravine—or the height,  
Lord Wellington was there.

With eagle eye and lightning glance,  
He mov'd 'midst fire and shot ;  
Where'er he mov'd, the troops of France,  
Soon found the field too hot.

Cool in the most tremendous fire,  
He watch'd the battle's change :  
To cheer the faint—fresh hopes inspire,  
And point the cannon's range.

'Midst balls and shells which plough'd the  
ground,  
Unmov'd he weigh'd the fight ;  
His staff fell one by one around—  
A sad and gloomy sight.

William De Lancy, valiant knight,  
Fell bleeding at his side :  
Conversing with the noble Duke,  
He met the ball, and died.

Sir Alexander Gordon, great  
For many a noble deed,  
Entreating with his master dear,  
Was likewise doom'd to bleed.

"Why will you thus expose," said he,

"A life so dear to all?"

More he'd have said—but down he went,

Hit by a whizzing ball.

Canning, who thro' the war in Spain,

(Gifted with mental power),

Served Aide-de-Camp to Wellington,

Was slain in evil hour.

Bearing a mandate thro' the ranks,

A grape-shot struck his waist;

Lord March rode up to raise his friend,

With grief and anxious haste.

"God bless you, March!" he faintly said;

"I hope the Duke is well."

"God bless the Duke!" then bow'd his head,

And dying, sigh'd—"Farewell!"



No Aide-de-Camp that day escap'd  
From death or dangerous wound ;  
And nought but Heav'n's protecting care  
Encircled him around.

Their rifle corps with deadly aim  
To hit him frequent tried,  
But still the ministers of death  
To others turn'd aside.

A chosen band of cavalry  
Rush'd on with deep intent ;  
They break the line—the staff they wound,  
To take him firmly bent.

But still high Heav'n's protecting care  
Defeated every plan :  
In vain they spread the wily snare—  
Recoiling ruin ran.

Once wavering, when a moment's pause  
Had turn'd the trembling scale,  
The Duke brought up the Ninety-Fifth,  
And scatter'd them like hail.

Now all was noise and wild uproar ;  
Now man to man engage :  
The rivers ran with human gore,  
And all was death and rage.

The Greys from Scotland's heathy hills,  
For three long hours and more,  
That day sustain'd the battle's weight,  
And met the cannon's roar.

The Ninety-Second, tho' reduced  
To scarce two hundred then,  
Charg'd with the bayonet, and broke  
Three thousand warlike men.

Right brisk the Highland-piper play'd  
 The Pibroch's well-known air :  
 Like Bard of old, he, undismay'd,  
 In deepest fight was there.

Astonish'd were the foe to hear,  
 Amidst such clash and din,  
 The warlike bagpipe strike the ear,  
 And urge the lads to win.

Huzzaing on for Scotland's fame,  
 Came up the gallant Greys ;  
 Tho' thin'd their ranks, they forward cheer'd,  
 Supported by the Bays.

The Scottish Greys, in glorious style,  
 Twice charg'd the columns deep ;  
 Twice thro' five thousand men they cut ;  
 As men in harvest reap.

Ewart, a Serjeant, seiz'd the staff,  
Where perch'd the bird of Jove ;  
And then they for the golden prize  
In deadly contest strove.

The eagle-bearer sought to thrust  
The Serjeant thro' the thigh ;  
But, parrying off the blow, he clove  
Him downward from the eye.

The next, a Lancer, furious aim'd  
His flying lance thro' air,  
Which glancing from his rapid sword,  
Expos'd its master bare.

The sword cut thro' the chin and teeth,  
And on the ground fell he ;  
When rushing up, with bayonet fix'd,  
Came one of th' infantry.

Bold he advanc'd, and swift gave fire—  
Then clos'd, to snatch the prize.  
Cut down,—his hopes and life expire;  
For death had seal'd his eyes.

Then proudly off the Serjeant bore  
The Eagle he had won;  
Its wings, that dripp'd with human gore,  
Seem'd glitt'ring in the sun.

Not one escap'd upon that spot,  
In France the tale to tell;  
Nor will it ever be forgot  
How utterly they fell.

But 'twas a fearful thing to see  
Such efforts by so few;  
And tho' they won the victory,  
Thousands *that* fight will rue.

For there the bravest warriors lay  
 That Scotland e'er could boast ;  
 Not one in ten escap'd that day  
 Of all the gallant host.

Cameron, and Mitchell—Campbell, Holmes,  
 Whose deeds should live in song ;  
 With many more, whose deathless names  
 The sculpture should prolong.

Now while the centre thus engag'd,  
 As has been said or sung,  
 On right and left the battle rag'd,  
 And sword and helmet rung.

Column on column—mass on mass,  
 The *left wing* press'd in vain ;  
 For death was the attempt to pass  
 That iron-pointed chain.

That post Sir Thomas Picton took—  
'Twas there the cannon's sweep  
Pil'd man on man, and rank on rank,  
In one promiscuous heap.

There many a valiant Captain fell,  
And clos'd his eyes in death ;  
As cheering to the charge his men,  
He spent his latest breath.

Here Captain Kelly, of the Guards,  
A Colonel fought, and slew,  
Commander of the Cuirassiers ;  
He clove his head in two.

The Twenty-Eighth, compact in square,  
Repuls'd the fierce attack  
Of furious Cuirassiers in mail,  
And nine times drove them back.

Still to the charge they madly drove,  
Trusting to coats of steel ;  
But British bayonets repuls'd,  
And made their squadrons reel.

Here *Shaw*, of pugilistic fame,  
With giant arm and might,  
Dealt death at every blow he struck,  
And sent their souls to flight.

Six of th' Imperial Guards, who blush'd  
To see their comrades fall,  
Like eager hounds to seize their prey,  
Fell on him one and all.

The first he split his brazen helm,  
The second he cut in two,  
The third he lopp'd his uprais'd arm,  
The fourth he ran him through,



But overpowered by wounds, and spent,  
He tumbled to the ground,  
Receiving as he sinking fell  
Another ghastly wound.

Picton, the chief of hardy deeds,  
Begrin'd with smoke and fire,  
His warriors on to conquest leads,  
Resistless in his ire.

But rallying up the Belgic troops,  
His hat he wav'd on high;  
"Come on!" he cried; "Come on, my boys!  
"Amongst them now let fly."

Sudden a ball his temple struck;  
Swift darkness clos'd his eyes.  
'Tis thus the brave man lives to fame,  
And for his country dies.

Our Light Dragoons their Lancers charg'd,  
But useless was th' attack ;  
With pike, and spear, and heavy-horse,  
They crush'd, or drove them back.

For these were men of giant strength,  
Back'd by the Cuirassiers ;  
All arm'd with pikes of nine foot length.  
They mov'd an hedge of spears.

Down they came clattering from the hill,  
O'er hurling man and horse ;  
Courage was vain, and vain was skill,  
To stop their torrent force.

Man over horse—horse over man,  
Roll'd down the slippery steep ;  
Their charge plough'd up the shiv'ring ground  
In ridges wide and deep.

But there the Blues and Household troops  
Like rolling whirlwinds rush ;  
Tremendous was the dreadful shock—  
Resistless was the crush.

Rapid as is the lightning's flash  
Their glittering sabres wav'd ;  
Stroke followed stroke—at every slash,  
No mail the wearer sav'd.

Like Autumn leaves these foemen fell.  
To think of flight was vain.  
Our heavy troops o'erturn'd, and slew  
Whole heaps upon the plain.

But still new multitudes came on,  
And endless seem'd the fight.  
Twice we cut up th' Imperial Guards ;  
Twice put their horse to flight.

Lord Uxbridge, foremost he to lead  
The heavy-horse Brigade,  
Dress'd up the line as gay and trim  
As if upon parade.

“ Now, oft,” he cried, “ my Household troops,  
“ The battle rests with you.”  
And countless were the deeds of might  
They did at Waterloo.

But Uxbridge, daring, and expos'd  
Throughout that murderous day,  
At last receiv'd the fatal shot,  
Which drove him from the fray.

Thinn'd every moment were both ranks,  
As down the victims fell ;  
They lay in piles, in rows, in banks ;  
Or heap'd to hillocks swell.

Now long the fate of men and kings  
Hung balanc'd in the scale ;  
And doubtful 'twas indeed to say  
Which cause would yet prevail.

For far had pass'd the light of noon,  
And slow came on the night ;  
Yet through the line the battle rag'd  
In unabated height.

The Irish howl, with wild dismay  
Oft fill'd the staggering foe ;  
They stubborn fought—not one gave way,  
Or flinch'd the fatal blow.

“ Honour ! ” the Inniskillens cried,  
“ And Ireland's cause for ever !  
“ It is our glory and our pride  
“ To fall ; but yield—no, never ! ”

The Prince of Orange, hurried on  
 Amidst the hostile lines ;  
 Encompass'd by an host of foes,  
 His liberty resigns.

But then the seventh battalion haste  
 Their gallant Prince to save ;  
 They snatch him from the closing ranks,  
 And from an early grave.

" Children !" the youthful Hero cried,  
 " You well deserve renown ;  
 " Here's my Insignia ! here's the gem :  
 " I would it were a crown."

" Long live the Prince !" the Belgians cry ;  
 " This token we will shield."  
 Then fix'd it on their colours high,  
 And rush'd along the field.

The Prince rode on thro' thick'ning death,  
 Where loud the cannon's bray :  
 When he receiv'd the fatal ball,  
 'Twas in the twilight grey.

Right thro' the arm the bullet drove,  
 And in his shoulder stay'd.  
 " Tho' I must quit the field," he cried,  
 " Be not by this dismay'd.

" For sure I see their bending lines  
 " Shrink from our leaden showers :  
 " Then urge the war, and still e'er night  
 " The victory will be ours.

In vain Napoleon urg'd the point—  
 In vain his columns sent.  
 Baffled and overthrown, they turn'd,  
 With half their numbers spent.

But yet so numerous were his troops,  
That waste still left them strong ;  
And tired with slaughter and with blood,  
We scarce could thin the throng.

Oft to the left Lord Wellington  
Had cast an anxious eye :  
From one till four he looked in vain—  
The Prussian flag to spy.

Now, when each moment teem'd with fate,  
General Bulow appear'd ;  
Thro' rough defiles and rugged roads  
His men their march had clear'd.

Forth from the woods with steady step  
They took the French in rear ;  
And now the conflict rag'd again,  
And now our spirits cheer.



Blucher, that thunder-bolt of war,  
Came rattling to the plain ;  
While all his troops unfold themselves  
In long extended train.

O ! 'twas a glorious sight to see  
These troops come down the hills,  
For as they wound in spiral lines,  
They seem'd like mountain rills.

But as they came, from every height  
Their blazing guns stream'd fire.  
The French their whole reserve bring up,  
And all their force require.

Now, as Napoleon anxious stood,  
To watch what might betide,  
He from his lofty tower of wood  
These glittering troops espied.

“ And who are these ?” he said to Soult,  
 With visage wan and pale:  
 “ The Prussians, Sire ! and much I fear  
 “ They will our rear assail.”

’Twas half past seven, and still the day  
 In gloomy doubt remain’d,  
 No man but now was deep engag’d  
 Where spreading carnage reign’d.

But tho’ the French with desperate heat  
 And maddened fury fought,  
 Their charges seem’d to hesitate,  
 From sad experience bought.

This was the moment Ziethen’s corps  
 Came up to the attack ;  
 Three times their right wing he cut thro’,  
 And charg’d them at the back.

" 'Tis over !" cried the Man of Blood,  
As trembling he look'd on.

" See, see, that simultaneous charge.

" See, there comes Wellington.

" The lines give way ! th' Imperials fly !

" 'Tis, save himself who can !

" In flight, none surely will deny,

" I am the foremost man."

So when a recreant school-boy leads

His comrades to a fray,

The first the mischief he to plot ;

The first to run away.

So fled Napoleon—swift to save

Himself from harm or ill.

He cared not for the human race,

But as they serv'd his will.

Now, where our Marshal view'd the fight,  
 With anxious care and pain,  
 He saw this movement on *their* right,  
 Nor saw the chance 'n vain.

For now was come that little point—  
 Decisive turn of fate ;  
 Which if not seiz'd, for ever flies,  
 And we regret too late.

“ Now ! ” cried the Duke of Wellington,  
 “ Now ! forward ! forward ! ho ! ! ”  
 Dread was the charge, and dread the crash,  
 And dread the overthrow.

As streams of melted snow and rain,  
 Rush down the mountain's side,  
 And meeting, roll along the plain,  
 In one o'erwhelming tide :

So mov'd the whole embattled field ;  
 The hills, the vallies shake ;  
 Not earth itself the foe can shield—  
 All Nature seems to quake.

The first batallions crush'd and press'd,  
 Confounded, retrograde :  
 Confus'd, the second wildly act,  
 By panic fear betray'd.

Horse upon horse—their riders thrown,  
 Run mad with wounds and fear.  
 Guns, carts, and men, in one rude mass  
 Proclaim destruction near.

On mov'd our line in one long curve—  
 Intent, they scarce drew breath.  
 No life was spar'd, for those who fell  
 Were trampled into death.

No order now their columns kept,  
 For mass was wedg'd on mass ;  
 Like waves tumultuous, on they roll'd,  
 And choak'd up every pass.

Bell mell in torrents swift they fled—  
 But flying, what could save ?  
 Destruction hover'd o'er their head,  
 And hurl'd them to the grave.

Some rush'd beneath the blazing beams  
 Of houses they had fir'd ;  
 Some headlong plung'd in bloody streams,  
 And in the flood expir'd.

Some, driven by desperation mad,  
 Leap'd down the yawning well ;  
 Others with anguish howl'd, and gnaw'd  
 The turf on which they fell.

Some, wounded, to the woods repair,  
 To seek a place to die ;  
 But still revenge pursu'd them there  
 With unrelenting eye.

Vehement curses, vows, and tears  
 Pour'd forth with dreadful cries,  
 Mix'd with loud shrieks and strokes of swords,  
 And groans, and dying sighs.

For now so thick the slaughter'd lay,  
 So strew'd the suffering mass,  
 The victors scarce could force their way,  
 Or o'er their bodies pass.

One undistinguish'd slaughter reign'd  
 In vast unbounded sway ;  
 Vengeance let loose, and unrestrained,  
 Clos'd in that wretched day.

The tardy night its darkness spread  
 Upon the flying rout.

“ Now stay the sword !” cried Wellington,  
 “ And give one general shout !

“ Blucher will bare the dreadful arm  
 “ Of justice in the fight ;  
 “ He will pursue the flying foe  
 “ Until the morning light.

“ Then stay we, masters of the field ;  
 “ Our men have need of rest :  
 “ Pursuit to Prussia we will yield,  
 “ For God our cause has blest.

“ My heart would surely break to see  
 “ So many brave men down ;  
 “ But we have won the victory—  
 “ Napoleon lost the crown !”



“ Adieu !” cried Blucher ; “ leave to me”

“ To chase the flying foe ;

“ Vengeance has burst o’er every bound ;

“ In signal overthrow.

“ Send every man that wields a sword—

“ Send every man and horse ;

“ Root up the blood-hounds from the earth”

“ Without the least remorse.

“ Remember *now*, they never gave

“ Pity to human woe.

“ To those who never mercy knew,

“ Shall we compassion show ?

“ No ; drive them to the gates of hell,

“ To breed rebellion there :

“ Unfit they are on earth to dwell,

“ Or breathe the vital air.”

Now swept along the mighty wreck  
Of baggage, arms, and men ;  
Disorganiz'd, no power could check,  
Or stay the torrent then.

Still true barbarians, tho' in flight,  
They mark'd their savage way ;  
The palace and the cot they light  
In malice, or in play.

Few prisoners had these miscreants got—  
But now dismay'd, and beat,  
Their victims they in cold blood shot—  
Poor vengeance for defeat !

Now glow'd the clouds with kindling red—  
Fire flash'd along the plains ;  
These shew'd the way the French had fled,  
Thro' corn-fields, woods, and lanes.

Onward, like hounds, with furious cry,  
The Prussians still pursue ;  
'Twas vain to stay !—'twas vain to fly !  
All they o'ertook they slew.

At Genappe first they tried to stand,  
And stem the torrent's might ;  
Entrench'd with what first came to hand,  
They hoped to stay the flight.

But scarce was heard the dread—hurrah !  
When panic seiz'd the crew ;  
Like sheep before the famish'd wolf,  
With fearful cries they flew.

The chase throughout that night was hot,  
Nor stay'd till break of day ;  
The dead and dying mark'd the route,  
O'er many a mile and way.

Scarce forty thousand men half-arm'd,  
And spent with wounds and fright,  
Escap'd the slaughter of that day,  
The carnage of that night.

That army which had hoped to spread  
One waste of ruin round,  
Had left one hundred thousand dead,  
Or bleeding on the ground.

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SCENE.—*The Field of Battle by Moon-light.*

Night now obscur'd the cheerless waste,  
And hung her lamp on high ;  
And fleeting shadows seem'd to haste,  
Before the wand'ring eye.

Those fertile plains and smiling fields,  
That teem'd with rising corn,  
One undistinguish'd ruin yields—  
A wilderness forlorn.

No more was heard the battle's bray!  
No more the cannon's roar!  
The storm of war had pass'd away—  
The rage of man was o'er.

But still it was not silence all,  
Tho' sound the sleep of death;  
Cries of the wildest note appall,  
And pass across the heath.

Vast piles of horse and men lay there  
In heaps, or scatter'd round.  
The friend and foe together share  
The cold and blood-steep'd ground.

Those who till death together fought,  
Now both together lay ;  
Enmingled in that cold embrace,  
They sigh'd their life away.

Wailings and shrieks of sudden pain,  
Affright the aching ear ;  
For every hope or help was vain—  
No tender friend came near.

No mother, sister, lover, wife,  
Was there to soothe or bind  
The wounds which drain'd the powers of life,  
Or calm the anguish'd mind.

Here, stretch'd to stiffen on the ground,  
A mother's tender care ;  
There lay, begrim'd with many a wound,  
A father's only heir.

There lovers, husbands, bleeding lay,  
 And with their dying breath,  
 Bless'd all they lov'd, now far away,  
 Then clos'd their eyes in death.

Here ceas'd to beat the trembling heart,  
 By pride of beauty scorn'd ;  
 He was a youth devoid of art,  
 Accomplish'd and adorn'd.

He woo'd a maid of fickle mind,  
 That triumph'd in his pain ;  
 For tho' she lov'd, she, still unkind,  
 Affected cold disdain,

Careless of life, in sad despair,  
 He sought the tented field ;  
 No truer heart e'er lov'd the fair,  
 Or better worth conceal'd.

Oh ! could the maid he lov'd so well  
Have seen his pallid cheek,  
Her breast with grief would surely swell,  
Her heart with sorrow break.

Next, on a mangled charger grey,  
Adorn'd in glittering vest,  
A youthful hero silent lay,  
Pierc'd thro' his manly breast.

He left at home a lovely bride—  
His heart for glory beat ;—  
“ Adieu, my love ! adieu ! ” he cried,  
“ We soon again shall meet.”

But never, never, more shall he  
Print on her lips a kiss ;  
And never, never, more shall she  
Return the hallow'd bliss.



How many weeping wives shall wail  
That bloody field with tears!

How many orphans hear the tale  
That frights their tender years!

How many maidens mourn the day  
When first, by glory led,  
The youth they lov'd was torn away,  
And number'd with the dead!

O weep we then, for those who fell  
In Europe's righteous cause!  
History to future times shall tell  
Their story with applause.

O weep we o'er the hero's grave—  
The stranger sure will weep!  
"Here!" he shall say, "here sleep the brave;  
"O tranquil be that sleep!"

May Heav'n protect the British Isles  
In Peace and Strength secure ;  
May they, unharm'd by Faction's wiles,  
From age to age endure !

THE END.

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